

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 IO-14 HA-05 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9861
INFO AMEMBASSY ALGIERS
AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY RABAT
AMEMBASSY MADRID
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY BAMAKO
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

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TAGS: PBOR, SS, AG, MO, IV, FR
SUBJECT: PRESIDENT HOUPHOUET-BOIGNY'S EXCHANGE WITH JOURNALISTS
AFTER HIS MEETING WITH PRESIDENT GISCARD D'ESTAING

REF: (A) PARIS 24186, (B) RABAT 4681

1. AUGUST 3 ISSUE OF SEMI-OFFICIAL "FRATERNITE MATIN" CARRIED
TEXT OF HOUPHOUET'S EXCHANGE WITH JOURNALISTS IMMEDIATELY AFTER
HIS AUGUST 2 MEETING WITH GISCARD. MOST OF THE QUESTIONS DEALT
WITH SPANISH SAHARA. FOLLOWING ARE KEY POINTS MADE BY HOUPHOUET.

2. IN RESPONSE TO A QUESTION, HOUPHOUET BEGAN BY STATING IT WAS
INCORRECT TO ALLEGE THAT HE HAD WANTED TO PLAY A MEDIATING ROLE
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IN THE WESTERN SAHARA DISPUTE. HOWEVER, IF HE WERE ASKED TO HELP
FIND A SOLUTION TO THE PROBLEM AND IF HE WERE ENCOURAGED BY PRE-
LIMINARY CONTACTS, HE WOULD NOT EVADE HIS DUTY AS AN AFRICAN.

3. IN REPLYING TO A NUMBER OF QUESTIONS ON THE SUBSTANCE OF THE
DISPUTE, HOUPHOUET STATED HIS POSITION WAS THAT THE FRATRICIDAL
WARFARE THAT HAD ALREADY DONE SO MUCH HARM HAD TO BE BROUGHT TO

AN END; THAT HE COULD NOT STATE HE HAD FOUND A SOLUTION; THAT IT WAS PREMATURE TO OUTLINE THE CONDITIONS FOR A SETTLEMENT BUT THAT A SOLUTION WAS BEING SOUGHT. ASKED IF A SETTLEMENT WAS BEING SOUGHT UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE OAU, HOUPHOUET SHATED THAT IT WOULD BE UNDER THE AEGIS OF THE OAU, WHICH HAD PASSED A RESOLUTION THAT ENTRUSTED THE SEARCH FOR A SOLUTION TO FOUR AFRICAN STATESMEN. IN RESPONSE TO THE QUESTION WHETHER MOROCCO MIGHT MODIFY ITS POSITION, HOUPHOUET REPLIED THAT IT WAS FIRST NECESSARY TO BEGIN DISCUSSIONS; THAT HE COULD NOT SAY WHAT ANY OF THE PARTIES WOULD DO WITH A VIEW TO ESTABLISHING PEACE; AND THAT IN ANY CASE THE QUESTION ASKED TOO MUCH OF HIM FOR THE MOMENT.

5. ASKED IF A PARTY TO THE DISPUTE, PERHAPS MOROCCO, HAD ASKED HIM TO BE AN INTERMEDIARY, HOUPHOUET STATED THAT HE COULD SAY NOTHING FOR THE MOMENT; THAT HE HAD HAD SOME CONTACTS AND WOULD HAVE OTHERS; AND THAT IF HE HAD THE CHANCE TO HELP FIND A SOLUTION HE WOULD NOT EVADE HIS DUTY. ASKED IF HE HAD SEEN MAURITANIAN OR MOROCCAN EMISSARIES IN FRANCE OR AFRICA, HOUPHOUET STATED THAT HE HAD MET MANY PEOPLE AND WOULD MEET MANY MORE BEFORE HIS RETURN TO IVORY COAST. IN RESPONSE TO ANOTHER QUESTION, HOUPHOUET REPLIED HE HAD NOT YET MET WITH BOUTEFLIKA.

6. ON A SEPARATE SUBJECT, HOUPHOUET WAS ASKED IF HE HAD DISCUSSED THE CREATION OF AN INTER-AFRICAN FORCE WITH GISCARD. HOUPHOUET REPLIED HE HAD NOT AND THAT IT WAS NOT A PROBLEM THAT CONCERNED THE PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC. AFRICANS THEMSELVES
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DECIDED ON AN INTER-AFRICAN FORCE TO INTERVENE WHENEVER CERTAIN COUNTRIES OR REGIONS OF AFRICA WERE MENACED BY CUBAN INTERVENTION. THEREFORE, IT WAS NOT AT THE ELYSEE THAT ONE DEALT WITH THE SUBJECT BUT AMONG AFRICANS AND IN AFRICA.
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